

# Dreaming After the Tornado

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Even now, as she sleeps deeply in her quiet house  
below windows thrown open to drought and grasshoppers,  
she sees herself splintering like the scorched field's tossed fence posts,  
her eyelids flutter-stripped leaves-

She searches the prairie for the path to follow  
and the break in the mountains where she will gallop like a child  
down the last steep slope to the salt water sound  
where she was born. Home, she will watch her grandmother  
pencil an almost indecipherable note to add  
to the great grandchild's birthday present.

She will sit with her parents as they read the evening news,  
work the crossword puzzle. Beneath the fireplace painting  
of boulders lashed by angry waves, she will hold up her hands,  
gleaming wet, as she measures them against the spray.

She's leaving snakes in the kitchen, mice in the food,  
leaving the silver cracked fence posts and silky-eyed hawks.  
She knows she will always hear the midnight combines  
rumble across darkened hills, piling up thunder and lightning,  
twining her dreams together like golden staw in starry bales of hay.